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TAGS: PREL PARM NATO KCFE PL

SUBJECT: CFE: POLAND SUPPORTS PARALLEL ACTION, BUT DOUBTS RUSSIAN WILL

REF: SECSTATE 116194

Classified By: Polcouns Mary T. Curtin for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Poland supports the U.S. proposal for parallel action on the A/CFE but has noted that since the Russians labeled it "insufficient" there is no basis for Poland to pursue ratification at this time. On October 11, in the wake of the of the informal CFE seminar held by all 30 state parties October 1-2 in Berlin, Mieczyslaw Kuzinski, Head of Regional Security at MFA, conveyed this to poloff along with points on Poland's suggestions for the way forward through NATO unity.

¶2. (C) Before proceeding with ratification, Poland would prefer that NATO obtain a political-level agreement with Russia indicating that the Russians will pursue the parallel action milestones defined in the U.S. proposal (Ref A). As part of this agreement, Russia must fulfill the Istanbul commitments, but not necessarily before ratification. There is "room to maneuver" on the modalities according to Kuzinski. However, he underscored that the Russians have not yet expressed the will to fulfill their end of the bargain. He recalled that in Berlin they had in fact added demands for "clarification" of Istanbul commitments. He labeled that meeting, "more failure than success."

¶3. (C) In any case, Poles believe NATO unity on the way forward is critical. Kuzinski cautioned that Russian dithering on parallel action could be the beginning of their attempt to completely redefine the European security architecture. He cited his understanding of their approach to Baltic accession as an example. According to Kuzinski, the Russians want immediate, bilateral talks with the Baltic States to establish new equipment ceilings. He opposed that idea and called for a common NATO position on any and all CFE-related talks with Russia.

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